

## Introduction

To understand the character of the City of Evansville, one only needs to look at the landscape. From the historic downtown to the new housing developments, Evansville is a beautiful community with wonderful parks and expanding development potential. These attributes are echoed in the value statements presented in Chapter 1 and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats listed in Chapter 2.

## Existing Land Use Inventory

The *Existing Land Use Map* was created from information provided by the City of Evansville. The description of the land use categories illustrated on the *Existing Land Use Map* are as follows.

### SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single-family residential development is spread throughout the City with the vast majority of neighborhoods in the western portion of the City. Information about the characteristics and quality of the housing supply is available in Chapter 4.

### TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Two-family residential development is scattered throughout the City, information about the characteristics and quality of the housing supply is available in Chapter 4.



### MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Multiple-family dwellings are defined as residential units with three or more units per structure. Apartments, quadplexes, and senior housing are each examples of multiple-family dwellings. Information about the characteristics and quality of the housing supply is available in Chapter 4.



Duplexes (Two-Family Residential) on Evansville's West Side

### COMMERCIAL

Commercial land uses are concentrated primarily along USH 14 and in the Downtown. Commercial land uses include retail business, restaurants, gasoline stations and service businesses like travel agencies, banks, and auto repair establishments. Chapter 8 profiles economic development opportunities.

## INDUSTRIAL

Industrial land uses, as shown on the *Existing Land Use Map*, include light and heavy industrial activities. Industrial properties are currently concentrated near the railroad corridor and along Water Street. To learn more about the area's economic development opportunities, refer to Chapter 8.



Example of Light Industry in Evansville  
Metal Culverts

## GOVERNMENT/INSTITUTIONAL

Government/Institutional uses include churches, medical clinics, the police station, fire station, parks, post office and schools. For more information about area churches refer to the Cultural Resources portion of Chapter 7. For information about the local school districts refer to the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter, Chapter 6. For more information about parks, see Chapters 6 and 7.

The table below is a numerical breakdown of the existing land uses in the City. This table is required by 1999 WI Act 9, Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law. The net density (total number of dwelling units divided by all residential acres) in the City is 2.45 dwelling units/acre (1,635 housing units/666.32 acres).

TABLE 22 2004 EXISTING LAND USE AMOUNT & INTENSITY		
Land Use Type	Amount (in acres)	% of Planning Area (City Limits)
Single-Family Residential	606.21	30.13%
Two-Family Residential	21.82	1.08%
Multiple-Family	38.29	1.9%
Commercial	78.00	3.88%
Heavy Industrial	93.90	4.67%
Light Industrial	46.39	2.31%
Government / Institutional	287.90	14.31%
Agriculture / Undeveloped	467.60	23.24 %
Wetlands	333.70	16.58%
Water	38.36	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,012.17</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Land Use and Development Regulations

### ZONING

The City of Evansville completed a comprehensive update of its zoning code except the sections on residential land uses in 2000. At that time, the Municipal Code, including the zoning code, was recodified. A number of subsequent amendments have been approved to address a variety of issues.

Most of the challenges with respect to the zoning code stem from the fact that the code is relatively new. Residents, developers, City staff, and other stakeholders are still in a learning period with respect to application of the code. The City also has discovered many errors that occurred during the recodification process. To review existing zoning requirements copies of the zoning code are available at City Hall.

Evansville's zoning code follows a traditional Euclidean<sup>1</sup> model that seeks to segregate uses by type and establishes dimensional requirements related to lot size, setbacks and building height. As new uses are created over time, they are listed specifically in the zones in which they are permitted. To be effective, this type of code must list every possible use and establish a zone in which that use would be appropriate. Euclidean codes are based on a philosophy that separation of uses will create a safer, healthier environment.

In recent years, the planning profession has developed alternative zoning models based on the building form and performance standards. Form-based zoning codes regulate a community based on the appearance (e.g. building line, landscaping, lighting, signage, building size, building materials, building design) rather than the type of use. Codes based on performance standards seek to regulate based on a particular set of operation standards rather than on particular type of use. Performance standards provide specific criteria for limiting noise, air pollution, emissions, odors, vibration, dust, dirt, glare, heat, fire hazards, wastes, traffic impacts and visual impacts of a use. With this approach, the proposed use is not a factor in development. If all operation standards can be met, any use can be permitted adjacent to another. Some communities are also using hybrid-zoning codes that combine performance and form-based zoning criteria to regulate land use. The City of Evansville Zoning Code does include some performance standards.

These two new approaches offer the advantage of regulating the impact and design characteristics of different uses, rather than limiting the types of uses allowed in a community. As a result, communities relying on these newer models are creating mixed-use communities with a variety of different land uses established in close proximity. This pattern of development provides a walkable environment in which a person can walk to neighborhood shopping, school, and employment destinations, as opposed to a Euclidian model that separates uses and often results in the need to drive to different destinations. More information about walkable communities is provided in the Community Design portion of Chapter 10 and in the Transportation Element.

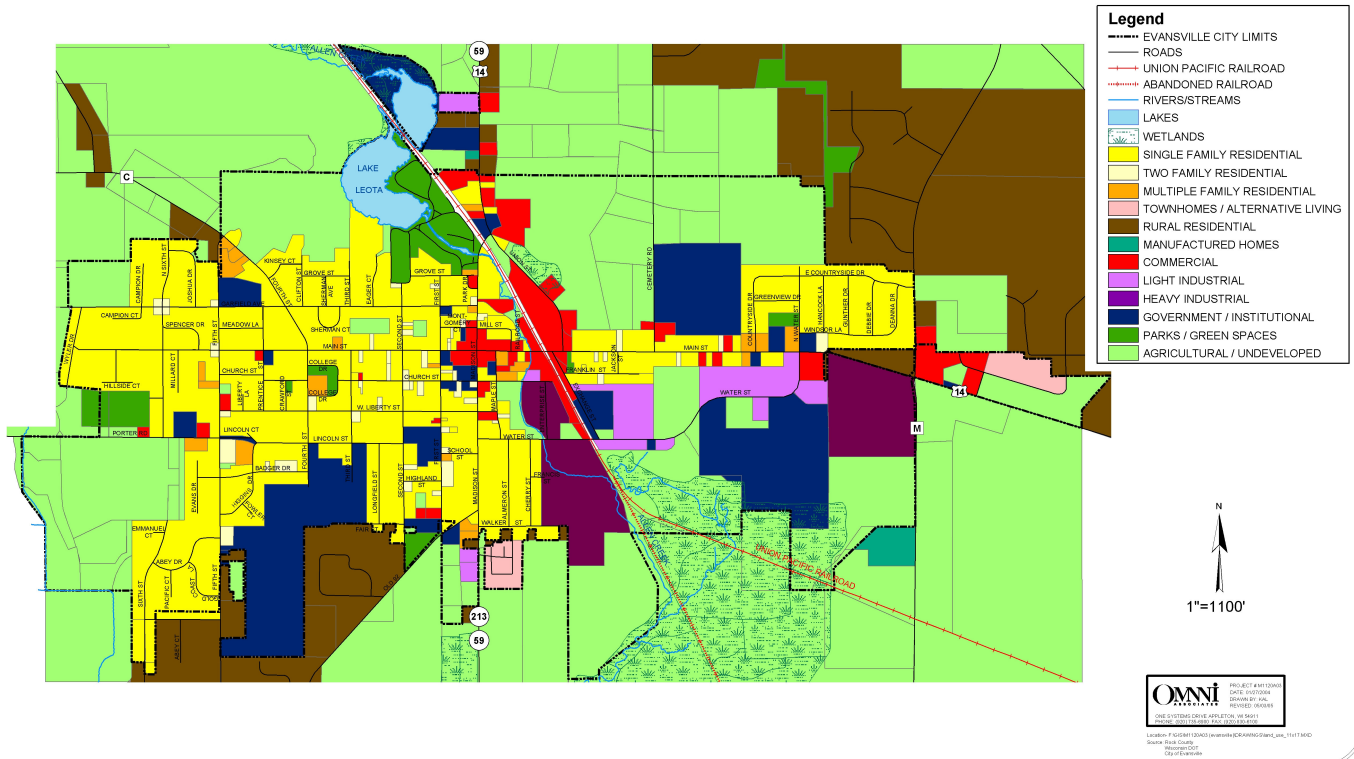
The next comprehensive update of the Evansville zoning code should give serious consideration to form-based and performance based standards. The code should include provisions to promote architectural variety in all neighborhoods. Additional zoning code revisions are recommended in the Implementation Element of this Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to Euclid vs. Amber Realty Company, 1926 U.S. Supreme Court Decision, which serves as the foundation for zoning practice in the United States.

# EXISTING LAND USE

## CITY OF EVANSVILLE



## **SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS AND EXTRA-TERRITORIAL PLAT REVIEW**

The purpose of a subdivision ordinance is to regulate and control the division of land to:

- Further the orderly layout and use of land;
- Prevent the overcrowding of land;
- Lesson the congestion on streets and highways; and
- Facilitate adequate provision for water, wastewater and other public improvements.

A subdivision ordinance includes technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and required improvements (e.g. stormwater detention, public and private wastewater, land dedication).

The City currently has extraterritorial plat review authority. The extraterritorial plat review authority allows the City to regulate the subdivision of land within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of a municipality (the area surrounding Evansville within 1.5 miles of the City boundary). The objective of extraterritorial jurisdiction is to review land divisions that are proposed up to 1.5 miles beyond the City to ensure street extensions, environmental corridors, and parks are preserved to provide efficient City expansion.

## **EXTRATERRITORIAL ZONING**

An important implementation tool for this plan is an extraterritorial zoning code.

The City of Evansville and the Town of Union prepared an extraterritorial zoning code which was repealed in 1988. Accordingly, the City has no extra-territorial zoning authority only extraterritorial plat review authority.

A new extra-territorial zoning code would address provisions for signage, conditional use permits, nonconforming uses and structures as well as a definition of different zoning districts. The development and adoption of an updated extraterritorial ordinance is encouraged to ensure development in the 1.5-mile area beyond the City limits is consistent with this plan. This process will require close coordination with the Town of Union.

## **OFFICIAL MAP**

The official map is one of the oldest plan implementation devices at the disposal of the local communities. It is also one of the most effective and efficient devices to manage the problem of reserving land for future public use. Section 62.23(6) of the Wisconsin Statutes provides that the governing body of any local municipality may establish an official map for the precise identification of right-of-way lines and site boundaries of streets, highways, waterways, and parkways, and the location and extent of railway right-of-ways public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds. Such a map has the force of law and is deemed to be final and conclusive with respect to the location and width of both existing and proposed streets, highways, waterways, and parkways, the location and extent of railway right-of-ways public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds. The statutes further provide that the official map may be extended to include areas beyond the corporate limits but within the extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction of the municipality.

The official map is thus intended to implement the community's master plan of streets, highways, parkways, parks, and playgrounds. Its basic purpose is to inhibit the construction of buildings or structures and their associated improvements on land that has been designated for future public use. The official map is a plan implementation device that operates on a communitywide basis in advance of land development and can thereby effectively assure the integrated development of the street and highway system. Unlike subdivision control, which operates on a plat-by-plat basis, and acts on development proposals, the official map can operate over the entire City in advance of development proposals. The official map is a useful device to achieve public acceptance of long-range plans, since it serves legal notice of the government's intention to all parties concerned well in advance of any actual improvements. It thereby voids the altogether too common situation of development being undertaken without knowledge or regard for the long-range plan. Thus it can help avoid public resistance when plan implementation becomes imminent.

The City of Evansville has adopted an official map, which includes all of the property within the 1.5-mile extra-territorial limits. The official map should be updated to facilitate the proper implementation of this comprehensive plan and future extraterritorial zoning regulations. This map should show all existing property and street right-of-way lines, as well as proposed right-of-way lines and site boundaries of streets, future collectors, highways, waterways, and parkways, railways, public transit facilities, parks and playgrounds within the extraterritorial boundaries. This updated map should be reviewed with the Town of Union.

## **Trends in Supply, Demand, and Price of Land**

### **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The City has a strong desire to carefully regulate the location of future residential development to ensure that future growth will not have a negative impact on the City's small town character or result in significant increases in service needs and costs.

Residential subdivisions in the City of Evansville created since 1990 have contained predominantly single-family houses in the 1,300 to 1,400 square foot size range. In contrast, in nearby communities such as Oregon and Stoughton, post-1990 residential subdivisions have included many single-family houses in 1,600 to 1,900 square foot size range.

To diversify Evansville's housing stock and protect current homeowners and businesses from property tax increases caused by poorly planned residential growth, there is a need for greater diversity in the new housing built in Evansville. This would include more new houses that meet the strong regional demand for single family houses in the 1,600 to 1,900 square foot size range or larger. At the same time, there will be a continued demand for single-family housing in the 1,300 to 1,400 square foot size range, as well as other choices to meet the needs of the aging population, young professionals, and single individuals living in the community.

Historically, local builders have been reluctant to build and market larger homes in a location where there is a potential for another builder to build a substantially smaller home next door or across the street. In future residential subdivisions, the developers and the City need to work together to establish distinct areas within each subdivision where different house sizes and types will be featured, plus churches, neighborhood commercial establishments, medical offices, and other compatible uses.

There is also a recognition that larger single-family homes are being built in surrounding townships, just beyond the City limits. Part of this has to do with the fact that townships can offer larger lots, a rolling topography, and other rural characteristics that people desire.

Rather than try to mimic the large-lot residential development in the Town of Union, which the City is ill-suited to provide, the City should focus on providing housing options that townships are ill-suited to provide. The City has an opportunity to use its infrastructure (e.g. water and sewer) to create unique, walkable neighborhoods with a mix of uses and housing types that offer a different choice for homebuyers. Many people will prefer this type of environment to a more isolated rural setting. Accordingly, the City can accommodate growth by building on its assets rather than trying to copy the rural development patterns found in nearby townships. Far more information about this strategy as it relates to new urbanism, traditional neighborhood development and walkability is provided in the next chapter.

## **FARMING**

Area farmers are beginning to experience pressure to accommodate rural residential development. The City anticipates that the new comprehensive plans of the nearby townships will identify preserving agricultural within the townships as a high priority. If the townships adopt this goal, the City will strongly support the townships in preserving agricultural land in the townships, provided the land to be preserved is not identified in this plan's *Future Land Use Maps* as being a likely site of future urban development.

The City is seeking to accommodate residential development with the City to help preserve outlying farm operations and minimize complaints about noise, odors and the like. Evansville sees this strategy as a means to protect farmland by directing development to the City. By coordinating with the Town of Union through extraterritorial zoning, Evansville can better direct development away from farmland and to areas of the City.

## **COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Commercial development in the City is concentrated primarily in the downtown and along USH 14. This pattern is expected to continue, though there is some opportunity for neighborhood services to be developed, particularly on the west side of the City. Neighborhood services could include a dentist or doctor's office, optometrists, dry-cleaners, sandwich shops, or similar small neighborhood business. If commercial land uses are included within future residential subdivisions, the commercial locations should be explicitly noted on the subdivision plats, so potential purchasers of nearby residential lots will have notice. Larger commercial areas would remain concentrated in the downtown and along USH 14. Industrial development is concentrated primarily along Water Street and the railroad corridor.

## **DEMAND**

Quality schools, parks and promotional events like the Tour of New Homes are bringing people to Evansville. As is reflected in state and local population projections, the City's population is expected to steadily increase over the next 20 years. Accordingly, demand for housing is expected to remain high.



New housing construction will be important to meet local demand. Moreover, providing housing for all stages of life and all lifestyles will be important to meet demand. Community survey respondents survey indicated they supported offering a variety of local housing types, including single-family houses, two-family dwellings, and multi-family housing. By providing choices, the City can accommodate the housing demands of families, single individuals, retirees, young professionals and others in need of local housing.

## TRENDS IN LAND AND HOUSING PRICES

Land prices in the City are expected to steadily rise in value as more and more people continue to move to the community to take advantage of its great location, schools, parks, and other amenities.

TABLE 23 MEDIAN OWNER OCCUPIED HOME VALUES			
Community	1990 Median Value	2000 Median Value	% Change 1990 - 2000
City of Evansville	50,800	111,500	119.4%
Town of Union	67,100	148,800	121.8%
Town of Center	63,200	155,000	145.3%
Town of Magnolia	54,600	131,700	136.7%
Town of Porter	66,300	145,100	118.9%
City of Janesville	56,000	100,000	78.6%
Rock County	52,300	98,200	87.8%
Dane County	78,400	146,900	87.3%

SOURCE: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

NOTE: Median Value of Housing Unit does not include value of land on which the housing unit is located.

Of concern is the fact that 2000 U.S. Census data shows a growing disparity between the new housing development that is occurring in Evansville compared with new housing in nearby townships. Over the next decade or so, it is anticipated that hundreds of new homes will be built in Evansville and the townships listed in table 23. If the value of almost every new home in Evansville, excluding land, is \$50,000 or more under the value of almost every new home in the nearby townships, excluding land, the disparity between the City and nearby townships in the median value of owner-occupied homes will grow wider. Better coordination with neighboring communities, extra-territorial zoning, planned annexation and shadow plat techniques are means to address this troubling trend.

## Annexation

As documented in the Community Profile Chapter, the City is expected to grow. This growth will require annexation. Annexation from neighboring communities' can be challenging and result in conflicts. To help mitigate that potential, the City made extensive efforts to include neighboring communities in the planning process to provide opportunities for communication about these challenges.

In Wisconsin, cities cannot instigate annexations. Town landowners have to petition for annexation; then cities have to determine whether or not they are willing to annex those parcels.

### GROWTH BOUNDARY

A growth boundary between the City of Evansville and Town of Union should be first verbally agreed to and then mapped. A growth boundary represents the planned limit of City growth for a 10 and 20-year period. These growth lines help the City to plan for its own growth and help limit conflicts with Union.



On April 22, 2004, the Governor signed SB 87 (2003 Wisconsin Act 317), which prohibits a city or village from annexing any town territory unless the city or village agrees to pay the town, for five years, an amount equal to the amount of property taxes that the town imposed on that territory in the year in which the annexation is final. However, a city or village is not required to make payments to the town if the governments enter into one of three specified boundary agreements. Information about these agreements is provided in the Intergovernmental Element.

## Opportunities for Redevelopment

### USH 14 GATEWAY

Opportunities for redevelopment exist along the USH 14 corridor to create gateways into and through Evansville. This would involve streetscaping, welcome signage and infill development. Each of these techniques is discussed in more detail in the Community Design Section of the next chapter.

As is mentioned in the zoning section of this chapter, there is an opportunity for redevelopment of some of the older housing located immediately east of the Downtown on USH 14. These units could be restored to accommodate a mix of development, including spaces that offer first floor professional office or retail space and second story residential space.



The City should consider expanding the existing downtown tax incremental district east and/or north along USH 14 or creating new districts at the ends of USH 14 to spur redevelopment of these gateway areas. The City has established the Evansville Redevelopment Authority to assist redevelopment and business retention/expansion in developed areas of the City.

### DOWNTOWN EVANSVILLE

Downtown revitalization was a topic discussed in great detail in the Economic Development Element. Elements of Downtown redevelopment would include infill housing (e.g. town homes and condos), the development of the area between Union Street and Allen Creek to provide a second frontage for businesses and link to USH 14, and infill development. Some downtown property owners already have made substantial investments in improving the facades and renovating the interiors of their properties. The City has created a new downtown tax incremental district and the Evansville Redevelopment Authority to provide incentives for additional private investment in downtown Evansville.

